

SLAIN UPON THY HIGH PLACES

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~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God will conclude commentary on the first book of the prophet Samuel in this report; and we will closely consider the death – and possible murder – of King Saul, as we open what is known as the second book of Samuel. Saul's death is a cold case mystery the Israeli police should probably re-examine because there seems to be myriad unanswered questions surrounding the circumstances of this death; and about who may be responsible.

In our previous report, God intervened in the life of David at a much-needed time and in a very definite manner as He prevented David from fighting against Israel. We saw David and his men thrown out of battle by the lords of the Philistine's, withdraw and return to Ziklag. When they arrived home, they found a tragedy had taken place, and David went chasing after the Amalekites. Remember, the Amalekites had burned and destroyed the city and taken everyone captive. David was able to rescue his people and bring them home. If you have not read our previous report and, indeed, all fifteen reports from first Samuel, I highly suggest you go back and do so now....

XXXI

1 Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.

2 And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons.

3 And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

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~ In Scripture, each account that concludes with the Israelites fleeing from an enemy does so because they are out of the will of God. They lose every battle they carry out against the will of God. This pattern of winning and losing is actually a fascinatingly stunning study. The misconception today that God approved of war in the Old Testament is simply due to uneducated and woeful ignorance. Almost every time Israel is warring – but they are not simply defending themselves – they generally lose the battle, although there are exceptions. This is a dark day for the nation Israel that we are studying.

The United States of America, after World War I and *PARTICULARLY* after World War II, decided we would live with impunitive disregard in gross immorality and abject societal sin. You can argue against that statement until you turn blue and fall over dead – won't change a thing. Today, this country accepts and supports homosexuality, legalizes drug use, is plagued by a multi-billion-dollar sex business, not to mention the human trafficking that is a bi-product of those things, an unsolvable gun crisis, and corporate theft and fraud perpetrated against powerless U.S. citizens is considered business as usual by our financial industry. It's no mystery why we have no peace; all while claiming Jesus, Jesus, Jesus incessantly. Friends, the Bible tells us our problem; we need to accept it.

America fights losing war after losing war which has now bankrupt our country; but *NOTHING* has gotten better. All of our national problems are currently escalating out of control. Let's keep this real, friends. We haven't had *ONE* moment of peace since the end of WWI. America has endured constant warfare since 1914 – with our latest defeat being that of Allah over the “American Jesus” of our society at large. It's a big problem, my beloved. Do you think there might be a lesson for us in Scripture? Any nation, people or individual will have nothing but turmoil in their lives – both collectively and singly – when they do not obey the laws and precepts of God. There is no peace for the wicked, saith the Lord God, through the prophet Isaiah - three times.

Of course, the beginning of the end of Saul is in this account when he is wounded. I think this was a random shot by someone who either did not

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recognize or did not know they had wounded the king. The real tragedy is that Saul was only wounded; but Jonathan was killed. Remember, Jonathan had gained many victories over the Philistines, and this very well could have been the battle where Jonathan and David were on opposing sides, if God had not miraculously intervened on David's behalf in our previous report.

David had been deeply disappointed and offended when he was voted out from fighting for his friend the king of the Philistines. Remember, the lords of the Philistines had protested against David and his men being anywhere near the battlefield. We also previously considered how David had made a promise to Jonathan to install Jonathan as second in command in Israel when David eventually took the throne. This could have all ended in tragedy; and I don't think David even realized it. See friends, our disappointments are God's appointments, as someone has so wisely said....

***4 Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.***

~ When Saul realized he was mortally wounded, he apparently feared the enemy would take him alive and torture him to death; and he was exactly right. Saul didn't want to go down like that by losing a battle. Saul was proud and egotistical, to say the least. The only acceptable outcome would be limp back to the castle and die there. Being fatally wounded by a chance shot from some buck private was not okay with Saul. The armourbearer was afraid to carry out Saul's command to kill him so, apparently, Saul committed – or, at least, attempted – suicide. At least, that's the story we have until our next chapter....

***5 And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.***

***6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together.***

**7 And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.**

**8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa.**

**9 And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people.**

**~ As a side note:** I believe this reveals why Saul wanted to put his own armor on David when Goliath challenged the men of Israel. Because if David had won against Goliath wearing Saul's armor – who do you think would have taken credit for killing Goliath? We know Saul would have done exactly that, because we have already seen Jonathan – Saul's own son – get the victory for which Saul blew the trumpet and claimed victory in....

**10 And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan.**

**11 And when the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul;**

**12 All the valiant men arose , and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.**

**13 And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.**

~ If this were the end of the story, we wouldn't have the mystery on our hands concerning Saul's death that we do. As we read on into second Samuel, however, we have another version of events. Either way, one conclusion we can finalize is that Saul is now dead. So, let's look back at Saul for just a moment. Saul failed at ruling God's property and people. The

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end of Saul's life was self-destruction; irrespective of the truth of what really happened. David had no problems with Philistine's – so, what was Saul fighting them for? The family problems. All bad.

The authority of God was rejected wholesale by Saul who chose to deliberately disobey His authority in myriad ways. This is a very, very dark day in the lives and land of the nation Israel. Interestingly, we learned a long time ago Saul had spared the Amalekites, and Samuel had rebuked him for doing so. That's when Samuel told Saul that to obey God was better than sacrifice! Saul should have listened to God, and he might have lived a little longer. It's better to listen to God as opposed to running around saying we're forgiven for our sins by the Blood of Christ. God wants *OBEDIENCE*, friends! Saul simply refused to bow to Almighty God during his lifetime; and his ending is the typical result...

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## I

***1 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag;***

***2 It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.***

***3 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.***

***4 And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.***

***5 And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?***

***6 And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.***

***7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I.***

***8 And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite.***

***9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.***

***10 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.***

~ Another account of what may or may not have happened to Saul at his demise is found in Scripture. The first record says the Philistines did the deed as an archer shot Saul. We know Saul was badly wounded but not dead; and we know he tried to get his own man to finish him off, but that man said no. We know Saul fell on his own sword – but, friends, I don't think that even killed him. This just isn't an open and shut case for the Bethshan Police Department. Here, an Amalekite confesses and takes credit, so to speak. I think it happened this way - the second account. This man thinks he is going to be given a war metal and a life pension by David for this act. Saul is dead – his sons are dead; the battle has been lost and the Philistines have taken away the entire northern area around Galilee from Israel. David is down in the south country, and he isn't even aware of what has happened. Of course, we know he has been busy trying to save his own little group of people who were carried away captive by the Amalekites – and they are just recovering from that episode....

**11 Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him:**

**12 And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.**

**13 And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.**

**14 And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?**

**15 And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.**

**16 And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD'S anointed.**

~ Remember, David had refrained from killing Saul twice by invoking that he would not kill the Lord's anointed. It will do us all well to try to view life from God's viewpoint, friends. As long as Saul was the king, David wasn't going to touch him; and David also disallowed others from killing him. God is the One Who put the crown on Saul and, as far as David was concerned, God was going to be the One to take it off. It is a dangerous and deadly thing for us to interfere with God's work. I could tell you some very interesting stories about people who attempted to disrupt and delay God's work and program and interfere with God's man. God moves in and judges – don't kid yourself. This Amalekite had no compunction about killing the Lord's anointed. So, if this man manufactured the story in order to be David's hero, it was a gross miscalculation....

**17 And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son:**

**18 (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.)**

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***19 The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!***

***20 Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.***

***21 Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.***

***22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.***

***23 Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.***

***24 Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.***

***25 How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.***

***26 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.***

***27 How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!***

~ Alright, the second book of Samuel is completely given over to the account of the life and reign of King David – just as the New Testament is totally given over to the Lord Jesus Christ. In the book of first Kings, we will have a limited record of the final years and declining health of David; but everything else we know about him is right here. This is an important section of Scripture because David is the ancestor of Jesus; and David



displays a type of Christ as King for us in the Old Testament. King David is a great king, a great man: and we will learn many great truths from his life's story. Actually, there are so many spiritual truths coming up in our Spiritual Safari that there is no possible way we could ever capture them all in print. I'd be typing and you'd be reading for thousands of years. Psalms was composed largely by David, and they all stem from direct experiences in his life that are recorded in the collective of Samuel. We now enter one of the most critical sections of Scripture to fully learn and comprehend.

Second Samuel will bring us in contact with many new characters we need to be acquainted with and understand. The first ten chapters are the wonderful triumphs of King David. From there forward, we come to the innumerable troubles of David; they are *ALL* a *DIRECT* result of his sin. Don't try to teach that David got by with his sins *OR* that any of the disobedience by David went unpunished, because neither are true. We're going to see God rebuke and severely punish him for every single one of his sins, friends.

Our safari must end this leg of our expedition with David lamenting in genuine sorrow. I'm sure most of the sorrow was for Jonathan. However, as bad as Saul was, he did teach Israel something very valuable. Remember, we have seen how Israel had been disarmed by the Philistines of weapons of iron. But Saul is the one who taught them to use the bow and arrow – which just happens to be an extremely effective and efficient weapon. Jonathan was an expert with the bow and arrow. Also, Saul, even in his treacherous dealings, had brought prosperity to Israel. It could never be said that Saul nor Jonathan were ineffective politicians. Jonathan and David were best of friends – they loved each other. And it was a sincere love. Remember, David was also still married to Jonathan's sister, Michal. She didn't really love David because, as we move ahead, we are going to see her betray David – again. David's life is going to show he was not too successful in his love affairs. That was a direct result of the disobedience of polygamy, too, by the way.

In our next report, we'll see David made king over Judah. Not all of Saul's sons were killed at this time; we'll see Abner, who was that captain of Saul that fell asleep on watch in chapter twenty-six, make Ishbosheth the interim king over the remaining eleven tribes of Israel. That's when civil war

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breaks out in the land. Ishbosheth was a very young boy at this time; and David will defeat Abner and the army, but at a very high cost which will totally weaken the nation. Even so, David will finally take the throne over all twelve tribes and move to the place he loved above all others – Mount Zion ~